

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTICES.

Monograph of the Lacertidæ. By G. A. BOULENGER, F.R.S. Vol. II. British Museum (Natural History), 1921. Pp. viii + 451. Price £3.

VOLUME I. of this Monograph, published in 1920, dealt with *Nucras*, *Lacerta*, and *Algyroides*; Volume II. deals with the remaining nineteen genera—*Philochortus* to *Holaspis*. Appended is a complete Catalogue of the specimens in the British Museum Collection, comprising over 5000, referable to about 200 species and varieties. In the tabulations of dimensions and scale-formulæ which are given throughout the work numbers of other specimens are also included, each marked with a symbol denoting the museum in which it is to be found; so that in future the student will be able to find any one individual for reference from among this vast material. In this it is an infinitely more comprehensive work than anything of its kind hitherto published, and its value can hardly be overrated. The general arrangement is clear and convenient. From the systematic and philosophic standpoints it constitutes a magnificent piece of work, for it gives one a sound orientation of this difficult group of lizards, so baffling to the novice. So many authors present their subject to the reader in a biassed form, suppressing evidence or hypotheses which do not corroborate their own views. Dr. Boulenger never misleads in this way. Moot points are brought forward as such and fully discussed. In dealing with the diphyletic origin of *Scaptira*, for instance, the natural relationships of the Asiatic and South African species are clearly expressed, and his reasons for maintaining them as distinct genera given; at the same time he discusses the principle involved, and adds:—"If, however, objection should be felt to the course here followed, I would suggest uniting the two genera into one, keeping up the different sections as here defined, rather than a further multiplication of the genera" (p. 348).

Herpetologists all over the world will sincerely regret that the 'Monograph of the Lacertidæ' is probably the final work on Zoology from the pen of Dr. Boulenger. In all he has published 29 complete volumes and 875 papers; there is, however, still much to be done, and no one will fill the gap which he has left by his retirement.

The Complete Nature Book, a complete Handbook and Guide to British Nature Study, embracing the Mammals, Birds, Reptiles, Fish, Insects, Plants, etc., in the United Kingdom. By S. N. SENGWICK. Pp. x and 495. pls. 40 (some coloured), and numerous text-figures. T. C. and E. C. Jack, Ltd., London and Edinburgh. Price 12s. 6d. net.

THIS book, as the Author states in the Preface, is very largely a compilation, and this must necessarily be the case in a work dealing with such a variety of subjects. In Part I., the "Animal World,"

the "Vertebrates" are dealt with under Chapters I.-VI., and the "Invertebrates" under Chapters VII.-XV.; Part II., the "Vegetable World," illustrated by many text-figures, extends to five chapters. In the "Introduction" there are suggestions as to the necessary apparatus for the naturalist; the "Appendix" is headed "Some wild pets I have known"—five in all. The Insects occupy pp. 181-299, illustrated by 11 plates, 3 of which are printed in colours. The representative figures of the beetles, 233 in number, occupying 4 plates, photographed natural size, are poor; those of the butterflies and moths fairly good. But if a specialist starts to analyse the text—say, the article headed "Some common British Beetles"—he will find here and there cause for criticism. In the list of the families the Buprestidæ are omitted altogether, the Nitidulidæ consist of a mixture of various Clavicornes, *Blethisa* is wrongly placed under the tiger-beetles (Cicindelidæ) and *Deronectes* under the whirligig-beetles (Gyrinidæ), and so on. Nevertheless, a beginner will find much to help him in naming his captures. Works on special subjects would, of course, be required by the collector when more accurate detail is required. The book is well printed and indexed, and the price at the present time is not high.

PROCEEDINGS OF LEARNED SOCIETIES.

GEOLOGICAL SOCIETY.

March 8th, 1922.—Mr. R. D. Oldham, F.R.S.,
Vice-President, in the Chair.

Dr. A. SMITH WOODWARD described certain photographs (natural size) of *Desmostylus* teeth from the Lower Miocene Sandstone of Southern Vancouver Island (B.C.) exhibited by IRA E. CORNWALL, F.G.S.

The exhibitor wrote that these *Desmostylus* teeth are slightly different from any found in either California or Japan, as they show a well-developed cingulum. They may be from an older species than *Desmostylus hesperus*, as recent research has shown that the formation in which they were found is at least Lower Miocene, while the formation in which *Desmostylus* remains have been found in California is Middle Miocene.

One of the teeth shown in the photographs was found in 1916 in the face of the sandstone-cliff west of Muir Creek, Sooke Bay, Southern Vancouver Island (B.C.). It was determined by the late Lawrence M. Lambe as the first right upper molar of *Desmostylus hesperus* Marsh, and is now in the British Columbia Provincial Museum at Victoria. The dimensions of this tooth are: Length = 34 mm.; width = 24 mm.; height of columns